

News from the Harding Green Association Board of Trustees

www.HardingGreen.org

DECEMBER, 2024

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Vice President: Art Ochs
Secretary: Carla Forte
Treasurer: Yuriy Gruzglin
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RECYCLING DATES FOR JANUARY:

*Tuesday January 14th and Tuesday January 28th
Regular trash pickup on Tuesday and Friday mornings*

MERRY CHRISTMAS,

HAPPY HANNAKAH AND

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL...

THERE WILL NOT BE AN OPEN MEETING THIS MONTH IN OBSERVANCE OF THE HOLIDAYS. WISHING EVERYONE A VERY JOYOUS HOLIDAY SEASON AND A JOYFUL NEW YEAR.

COMMUNITY MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES:

HARMONY HAS COMPLETED FALL LEAF CLEAN-UP AND HAS BROUGHT IN SNOW EQUIPMENT TO THE POOL PARKING LOT IN PREPARATION FOR SNOW EVENTS.

MORRIS RENOVATIONS HAS COMPLETED THE GUTTER CLEANING AND LEADER FLUSHING PROJECT WHICH WAS UNFORTUNATELY DELAYED BECAUSE OF RAIN AND FREEZING TEMPERATURES.

L& W WILL REMOVE WOOD AND OTHER DEBRIS BETWEEN ASH AND POPLAR LANES BEFORE CHRISTMAS. THEY HAVE COMPLETED 3 WORK ORDERS.

IF YOU DID NOT ATTEND THE NOVEMBER 26TH OPEN ZOOM MEETING, PLEASE READ THE ATTACHED MINUTES FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THE MONTHLY INCREASE IN MAINTENANCE FEES ALONG WITH THE ONE-TIME SPECIAL ASSESSMENT AND OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR HOMEOWNERS.

AS A REMINDER, BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025, OUR MONTHLY HOA DUES BECOME \$525.00 PER MONTH WITH A ONE-TIME SPECIAL ASSESSMENT OF \$300.00 TO BE PAID ON JANUARY 1ST.

THE HGA FEE PAYMENT OPTIONS FORM CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE: WWW.HARDINGGREEN.ORG OR YOU CAN GO DIRECTLY TO PAY.ALLIANCEASSOCIATIONBANK.COM

TO UPDATE/EDIT YOUR PAYMENTS IF YOU CURRENTLY MAKE ELECTRONIC WITHDRAWALS.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEW NJ LAWS REGARDING HOA RESERVE STUDIES:

THE PURPOSE OF THE NEW RESERVE STUDY LAW IS TO ENSURE THAT WE HAVE ENOUGH FINANCIAL RESERVES TO PAY FOR NECESSARY MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS AS NECESSARY.

HARDING GREEN'S LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT TEAMS HAVE EMBRACED THE IMPORTANCE OF RESERVE STUDIES LONG BEFORE THE RECENT RESERVE STUDY LAWS WERE ENACTED.

OF LATE, THERE HAS BEEN MUCH MISINFORMATION SHARED AND CONFUSION REGARDING THE NEW MANDATES. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS OFFERED AS USEFUL INFORMATION.

WHEN KIPCON ENGINEERING RECENTLY CONDUCTED HGA'S RESERVE STUDY UPDATE, THEY ASSISTED US IN PLANNING FOR MAJOR REPAIRS AND REPLACEMENTS THAT BECAME NECESSARY IN ANY HOA COMMUNITY AT SOME TIME OR ANOTHER PRIMARILY BASED ON UNAVOIDABLE DETERIORATION. KIPCON'S RECENT UPDATE OF OUR RESERVE STUDY (LAST CONDUCTED IN 2019), REASSESSED THE CONDITION AND PROJECTED LIFE SPAN OF OUR ASSOCIATIONS KEY ASSETS SUCH AS ROOFS, ROADWAYS, SIDEWALKS, ETC. ALLOWING US TO DEVISE A PLAN TO PROPERLY BUDGET AND PREPARE FOR FUTURE COSTS.

FOR HOMEOWNERS, THIS MEANS AVOIDING THE SHOCK OF SUDDEN SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS OR UNEXPECTED FEE INCREASES. FOR THE BOARD AND PROPERTY MANAGER, IT PROVIDES A CLEAR ROADMAP TO NAVIGATE THE FUTURE WITH CONFIDENCE AND ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH LOCAL REGULATIONS. WITH A STRONG RESERVE FUND AND A STRUCTURED PLAN IN PLACE, WE CAN THRIVE FINANCIALLY AND AVOID EMERGENCIES.

FOLLOWING ARE SOME KEY WAYS THAT THE STUDY SAFEGUARDS HARDING GREEN'S FUTURE:

1. **PREPARES FOR MAJOR EXPENSES** - EVERY HOA COMMUNITY WILL BE INEVITABLY SUBJECTED TO AGING AND REQUIRE REPLACEMENT OR SIGNIFICANT REPAIRS OF COMMON STRUCTURES AND ELEMENTS. A RESERVE STUDY PROVIDES A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF EACH COMPONENT'S LIFESPAN, ESTIMATED REPAIR COSTS, AND THE TIMING OF THESE FUTURE EXPENSES.
2. **STABILIZES HOA FEES** - WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPERLY FUNDING OUR RESERVES, WE MIGHT BE IN DANGER OF A DRASTIC HIKE IN MAINTENANCE FEES OR AN ASSESSMENT TO COVER UNFORESEEN EXPENSES. A WELL-IMPLEMENTED PLAN CAN DISTRIBUTE ANTICIPATED EXPENSES EVENLY, ALLOWING FOR MANAGEABLE, INCREMENTAL FEE ADJUSTMENTS RATHER THAN DRASTIC INCREASES.
3. **ENHANCES PROPERTY VALUE** - HOA'S WITH A WELL-MAINTAINED INFRASTRUCTURE AND A SOLID RESERVE FUND PLAN ARE TYPICALLY MORE APPEALING TO BUYERS AND RENTERS. WHEN PROSPECTIVE BUYERS KNOW THAT THERE IS A RESERVE STUDY IN PLACE, IT SIGNALS PROACTIVE FINANCIAL AND PHYSICAL UPKEEP. WELL MAINTAINED COMMUNITIES OFTEN RETAIN AND EVEN APPRECIATE IN VALUE BECAUSE OF THEIR AESTHETIC APPEAL AND FUNCTIONAL RELIABILITY. ADDITIONALLY, A STRONG RESERVE FUND PROTECTS PROPERTY VALUES BY ENSURING THE FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE FOR TIMELY MAINTENANCE, MINIMIZING ANY NEGATIVE IMPACTS FROM DEFERRED UPKEEP OR NEGLECTED AMENITIES. A STUDY CONDUCTED BY ASSOCIATION RESERVES SHOWED THAT HOMES IN HOA COMMUNITIES WITH STRONGLY FUNDED RESERVES SOLD FOR 12% MORE THAN COMPARABLE HOMES IN UNDERFUNDED ASSOCIATIONS.
4. **ENSURES COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS** - NEW JERSEY (AND SEVERAL OTHER STATES) HAVE SPECIFIC REGULATIONS OR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESERVE FUNDS TO PROTECT HOMEOWNER'S AND MAINTAIN COMMUNITY STANDARDS. THE UPDATED RESERVE STUDY NOT ONLY ENSURES COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAWS BUT ALSO PROTECTS US FROM POTENTIAL PENALTIES OR LEGAL ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH UNDERFUNDING.
5. **IMPROVES FINANCIAL HEALTH** - A WELL-FUNDED RESERVE, AS STRUCTURED BY A RESERVE STUDY, ALLOWS US TO ADDRESS MAINTENANCE NEEDS WITHOUT INCURRING DEBT, REDUCING FINANCIAL STRAIN AND PROMOTING A HEALTHIER FISCAL ENVIRONMENT. BY BUILDING A STRONG RESERVE FUND, WE CAN FOCUS ON FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS.
6. **PROMOTES COMMUNITY CONFIDENCE & TRANSPARENCY** - A RESERVE STUDY PROVIDES DETAILED DOCUMENTATION OF HOW FUNDS WILL BE USED. WHEN THERE IS A CLEAR PLAN FOR MAINTAINING AND ENHANCING OUR COMMUNITY, A POSITIVE ATMOSPHERE CAN BE FOSTERED AND HELP CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE COHESIVE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY



7. **MITIGATES RISKS WITH PROACTIVE ASSET MANAGEMENT** - A RESERVE STUDY ACTS AS A RISK MANAGEMENT TOOL BY IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL ISSUES BEFORE THEY BECOME A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM. PROACTIVE MAINTENANCE ALLOWS HOA'S TO ADDRESS WEAR AND TEAR IN A CONTROLLED, TIMELY MANNER, REDUCING THE RISK OF EMERGENCIES. FOR INSTANCE, ROUTINE INSPECTIONS AND SCHEDULED UPDATES CAN PREVENT MINOR ROOFING ISSUES FROM ESCALATING INTO COSTLY ONES. BY ADDRESSING ISSUES IN ADVANCE, WE WILL BE MUCH MORE EQUIPPED TO MANAGE EXPENSES MORE EFFECTIVELY, ENSURING RESIDENTS A "HAPPIER AND HEALTHIER" COMMUNITY TO RESIDE IN.

ANSWER: NO. "FULLY FUNDED" IS A MEASURE OF RESERVE FUND SIZE, WHERE THE CASH IN RESERVES EQUALS THE CASH VALUE OF DETERIORATION. THE LAW DOES NOT REQUIRE ASSOCIATIONS TO BUILD THEIR RESERVE FUNDS TO ANY SUCH SPECIFIC LEVEL. THE LAW ONLY REQUIRES ASSOCIATIONS TO HAVE A **PLAN TO FUND RESERVES** ON AN ONGOING BASIS SUCH THAT FOR THE NEXT 30 YEARS, RESERVE CASH WILL EXIST WHEN NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH ALL ANTICIPATED RESERVE PROJECTS. IN OTHER WORDS, **AT A MINIMUM**, THE PLAN MUST BE TO "NOT RUN OUT OF RESERVE CASH AT ANY TIME IN THE NEXT 30 YEARS". NOTE THAT "MORE THAN THE MINIMUM" IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED IN ORDER TO PROTECT OWNERS FROM SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS, SINCE THE FUTURE RARELY WORKS OUT EXACTLY ACCORDING TO PLAN.

FYI NEW JERSEY RESERVE STUDY LEGISLATION FAQs:

QUESTION: WILL THE NEW LEGISLATION INCREASE THE COST OF OUR HOME OWNERSHIP?

ANSWER: NO, THE EXPENSES THAT HOMEOWNERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ARE UNCHANGED. THE LAW JUST REQUIRES THE ASSOCIATION TO FUND INEVITABLE RESERVE PROJECTS ON AN ONGOING, BUDGETED BASIS, RATHER THAN WAIT AND SUFFER EXPENSIVE AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS DETERIORATION WHILE LAST MINUTE FUNDING VIA SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS OR LOANS ARE PURSUED.

QUESTION: MUST WE FUND OUR RESERVES?

ANSWER: YES, SO THAT THE 30-YR FUNDING PLAN PROVIDES SUFFICIENT CASH TO PERFORM ALL THE ANTICIPATED RESERVE PROJECTS WITHOUT RELIANCE ON FUTURE LOANS OR SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS.

QUESTION: CAN AN ASSOCIATION OVERSPEND ON A RESERVE COMPONENT IN THE RESERVE STUDY?

ANSWER: YES, RESERVE STUDIES ARE BASED ON ESTIMATES, AND OVERAGES ARE EXPECTED TO OCCUR. THE ASSOCIATION CAN "OVERSPEND" FROM RESERVES ON A PROJECT AS LONG AS IT DOES NOT INTERFERE WITH THE ASSOCIATION'S RESERVE CASH ABILITY TO PERFORM OTHER RESERVE PROJECTS FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS, AND THE BOARD RESOLVES TO RESTORE THE OVERAGE WITHIN 5 YEARS. THIS WILL REQUIRE REGULAR UPDATING OF OUR RESERVE STUDY'S FINANCIAL PLAN.

QUESTION: MUST WE BE "FULLY FUNDED" (100% FUNDED) BY ANY POINT IN TIME?

QUESTION: OUR ASSOCIATION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BUILDINGS AS PART OF OUR COMMUNITY. DO THE BUILDINGS NEED A STRUCTURAL INSPECTION PER THE NEW LEGISLATION?

ANSWER: NO, THE STRUCTURE OF THE BUILDINGS IN OUR COMMUNITY IS NOT A PRIMARILY LOAD BEARING SYSTEM, BUT A FRAME-BUILT CONSTRUCTION.

QUESTION: UNDER THE NEW NJ RESERVE STUDY LEGISLATION, CAN AN HOA IMPOSE A SPECIAL ASSESSMENT (ASSUMING THEY FOLLOW PROCEDURES OUTLINED IN THEIR GOVERNING DOCUMENTS) FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS INCLUDING LARGE REPAIR/REPLACEMENT PROJECTS?

ANSWER: YES

QUESTION: IF A MORTGAGE LENDER DETERMINES THAT HOA RESERVES ARE NOT ADEQUATELY FUNDED, CAN THEY CHOOSE NOT TO UNDERWRITE A LOAN FOR A PURCHASER?

ANSWER: YES BECAUSE OF CONCERNS ABOUT FUTURE SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS, POTENTIALLY LOWERING THE PROPERTY VALUE AND MAKING LENDERS HESITANT TO APPROVE LOANS. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO MAINTAIN RESERVE FUNDS THAT SHOWS THE ASSOCIATION IS PROACTIVELY PLANNING FOR FUTURE REPAIRS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF UNEXPECTED FINANCIAL BURDENS ON UNIT OWNERS.

IF YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE EMAIL HGATRUSTEES@YAHOO.COM AND WE WILL BE HAPPY TO REACH OUT TO OUR RESERVE STUDY SPECIALIST TO PROVIDE AN ANSWER!



Open Meeting, Tuesday, November 26th, 2024 (Via Zoom)

Meeting Attendees:

Richard Cook, President
Art Ochs, Vice President
Yuriy Gruzglin, Treasurer
Carla Forte, Secretary
Soren Haagensen, Trustee
Gary McHugh, Manager

6 Homeowners

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm

Richard Cook wished all a Happy Thanksgiving

Following the Agenda:

- Approval of Minutes for September 2024 minutes and October Annual meeting 2024 minutes. Motion made for approval, seconded and approved 5/0
- Direction of Board Positions following election: Board elected to keep current positions the same and appoint Art Ochs as vice president (vacancy) and elect Soren Haagensen to act as Trustee (Art's former position). Motion made for approval, seconded and approved 5/0
- Treasurer's Report – As of October 31, 2024: Operating Account balance-\$197,279.18 – Reserve Account balance - \$147,181.30.

The treasurer reported that the Board, along with the results of the recently updated Reserve Fund study, is taking the suggestions of Kipcon Engineering to increase our reserve fund contributions in order to plan and implement for future repairs. The decision was made to increase the monthly maintenance fee to \$525 per month for the townhouses while keeping the 5 single homes HOA fees unchanged at \$645.00 per month. This decision was made due to an unfairly disproportionate assessment charged for a large snow removal assessment several years ago. Additionally, the Board is requesting a \$300 special assessment to be paid on January 1, 2025 (exempting the 5 single family homes). All monies collected will go directly into our reserve account. Currently, the monthly contribution is \$11,300. Upon the requested funding, \$43,400 will be collected in January. With the \$25 monthly fee increase and the \$300 one-time assessment, we will slightly surpass the funding recommendation by Kipcon Engineering firm by several percentage points.

- Motion made to approve the maintenance fee increase of \$25 per month until the end of the fiscal year and a one-time special assessment of \$300 to be collected in January 2025. Seconded and approved 5/0.

Manager's Report:

- The snow contractor is Harmony Landscaping who has begun moving some necessary equipment to the pool parking lot.
- Gutter/leader cleaning was completed by Morris Renovation Inc.
- Leaf clean-up is coming to an end.
- The pool pump has been removed, winterized and is being stored until next season.

- Tree trimming underway where was necessary.
- Ferrera Electric repaired a bad connector near the corner of Harding Green Drive and Spruce Lanes which restored downed service to the streetlamps.
- Hickory lane fence is noted for repair.

Open Items from the Floor:

- A homeowner asked if the \$300 assessment could be spread out. A Board member said it was such a modest amount that would be more impactful if paid in full at once to add to the reserve account. Of course, if a homeowner needs more time to pay, an arrangement can be made. It's important to fund the account to replace roofs that have come to the end of their useful life.
- A homeowner inquired as to why 2 trees were planned at 5 and 7 Sycamore lanes without regard to whether or not they would shade the front doors as the request. A board member commented it would take years for them to grow to shade and another solution should be considered. It was further discussed that the blue spruce planted at the corner of Sycamore and HG drive will take years to grow tall enough to cause cars to have blocked views (if at all) when exiting. It was suggested that any cars should come to a stop at the end of the lane and look left and right before making a turn as a matter of common sense.
- A homeowner thanked Art Ochs for all he does for the betterment of the community.
- A homeowner asked how it will be decided which roofs will be replaced and when. A board member said it is a huge project and is a balancing act between those roofs that are potentially closer to the end of life than others and the daunting job of rectifying the haphazard shingle colors in many buildings because a prior vendor did a poor job with maintaining color consistency. It is the goal to replace 12-14 roofs in 2025 and complete those that remain within 3-5 years.

With no more questions, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Meeting adjourned at 7:10pm.
Happy Thanksgiving.



Date	Check #	Payee	Amount
10-100000-00-00 AAB - Operating - 8704			
11/04/2024	100123	RBC FBO HARDING GREEN CAP RES FISN, A DIV. OF	\$11,327.75
		90-902050-00-00 Capital Reserve - Contribution	\$11,327.75
11/04/2024	100124	TAYLOR MANAGEMENT	\$4,047.00
		80-800000-00-00 Management Fees	\$4,047.00
11/12/2024	100565	PSE & G	\$36.11
		Invoice #: 601609080764	
		60-600200-00-00 6594159100-PSE & G	\$36.11
11/18/2024	100566	INTERSTATE WASTE SERVICES INC (DETROIT)	\$2,601.74
		Invoice #: 0010108071	
		70-702300-00-00 11/24-MLY SVC-INTERSTATE WASTE SERVICES INC (DETROIT)	\$2,601.74
11/18/2024	100567	PYE-BARKER FIRE & SAFETY LLC	\$463.82
		Invoice #: IV00336514	
		70-700000-00-00 ANNUAL HYDRANT INSP-PYE-BARKER FIRE & SAFETY LLC	\$463.82
11/18/2024	100568	GINA MCBRIDE	\$255.80
		Invoice #: 111424	
		72-720250-00-00 PATIO FURNITURE DAMAGED BY TREE-GINA MCBRIDE	\$255.80
11/20/2024	100569	HARMONY LANDSCAPING &	\$9,716.41
		Invoice #: 17336	
		72-720000-00-00 LANDSCAPING SERVICES-HARMONY LANDSCAPING &	\$9,716.41
11/20/2024	100570	L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$85.00
		Invoice #: 149	
		70-700000-00-00 9 HEMLOCK-PAINT GARAGE DOOR TRIM-L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$85.00
11/20/2024	100571	L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$475.00
		Invoice #: 150	
		70-700000-00-00 8 BIRCH-SEAL AROUND WINDOWS-L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$475.00
11/20/2024	100572	L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$85.00
		Invoice #: 152	
		70-700000-00-00 7 TULIP-REP LEADER EXTENSION-L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$85.00
11/20/2024	100573	L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$150.00
		Invoice #: 153	
		70-700000-00-00 5 SPRUCE LANE-REP DISCONNECTED LEADER TO GUTTER-L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$150.00
11/20/2024	100574	L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$350.00
		Invoice #: 154	
		70-700000-00-00 7 POPLAR-PAINT DECK BOARDS-L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$350.00
11/20/2024	100575	002 AUTO PARTS	\$25.90
		Invoice #: 086-103124	
		80-800650-00-00 OCT - POSTAGE/COPIES/ENV-002 AUTO PARTS	\$25.90
11/22/2024	100576	VERIZON (NEWARK) PO BOX 16801	\$245.39



Date	Check #	Payee	Amount
		Invoice #: 001-32102624--	
		60-600600-00-00 653-121-781-0001-32-VERIZON (NEWARK) PO BOX 16801	\$245.39
11/22/2024	100577	JCP&L (jersey central power & light)	\$101.87
		Invoice #: 95657914059	
		60-600000-00-00 100 006 486 086-JCP&L (jersey central power & light)	\$101.87
11/22/2024	100578	JCP&L (jersey central power & light)	\$10.51
		Invoice #: 95657914060	
		60-600000-00-00 100 006 521 494-JCP&L (jersey central power & light)	\$10.51
11/22/2024	100579	JCP&L (jersey central power & light)	\$89.09
		Invoice #: 95657914057	
		60-600000-00-00 100 006 481 400-JCP&L (jersey central power & light)	\$89.09
11/22/2024	100580	JCP&L (jersey central power & light)	\$62.31
		Invoice #: 95657914058	
		60-600000-00-00 100 006 484 693-JCP&L (jersey central power & light)	\$62.31
11/22/2024	100581	L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$475.00
		Invoice #: 155	
		70-700000-00-00 2 birch In-touch up siding boards-L & W ENTERPRISE LLC	\$475.00
11/22/2024	100582	GREEN TOUCH LANDSCAPING / WILLIAM PERALTA	\$4,100.00
		Invoice #: 3519	
		72-720150-00-00 MAKE NEW BED FRONT OF THE POOL-GREEN TOUCH LANDSCAPING / WILLIAM PERALTA	\$4,100.00
		Account Totals	# Checks: 20
			\$34,703.70
10-102050-00-02 Landolt - Cap Res Invest - 0658			
11/30/2024			\$30,000.00
		10-102000-00-02 Transfer to Landolt - Cap Res - 0658; Funds Transfer	\$30,000.00
		Account Totals	# Checks: 0
			\$30,000.00
		Association Totals	# Checks: 20
			\$64,703.70